# **Finding Of No Significant Impact**

# Elgorriaga Ranch Acquisition Phase II, Peppergrass Flat Project

Recommended:	Dougles Ollewsmith Environmental Specialist	Date:	8/20/10	
Recommended:	Program Manager, Central Valley Project Conservation Program	Date:	8/23/10	
Approved:	Chief, Division of Environmental	Date:	8/26/10	
Approved:	Manager, Pacific Southwest Region Office Admy AND	_ Date:	8/26/10	
FONSI No.	10-32-MP			

U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation Mid-Pacific Region Sacramento, CA U. S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service Pacific Southwest Regional Office Sacramento, CA

# **Background**

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) proposes to provide \$217,960 from the Central Valley Project Conservation Program (CVPCP), and the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) proposes to provide \$59,040 from the Central Valley Project Improvement Act Habitat Restoration Program (HRP) to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to help purchase one of three parcels on the Elgorriaga Ranch in Fresno County, California (for a total of \$277,000).

Peppergrass Flat is nestled in the Ciervo Hills, a low-lying north-south tending range that forms the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley between Panoche Creek and Cantua Creek.

The purpose of the action is to protect the Peppergrass Flat area from development in order to maintain existing endangered species populations under permanent conservation and management by the Federal government. The three federally endangered species that will benefit from the acquisition all declined as a direct result of the conversion of arid grasslands and scrublands to irrigated agriculture in the western San Joaquin Valley Species include the San Joaquin kit fox, giant kangaroo rat, and San Joaquin wooly-threads. It would also protect the state threatened San Joaquin antelope squirrel, short-nosed kangaroo rat, coast horned lizard, and several species of endemic insects. Protection of the three sections targeted for acquisition will substantially buffer San Joaquin kit fox and giant kangaroo rats from extinction in the face of threats to the Ciervo-Panoche populations from proposed renewable energy projects.

# **Findings**

Reclamation and the Service prepared a joint environmental assessment (EA) on the proposed grant in August 2010 which is incorporated by reference. The Division of Environmental Affairs of the Mid-Pacific Region of Reclamation, and the Pacific Southwest Regional Office of the Service, have found that the proposed action is not a major Federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required for carrying out the proposed action. The EA complies with the Council of Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations and other requirements such as the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and local and State requirements. It meets Reclamation's and the Service's public involvement requirements.

Following are the reasons why the impacts of the proposed action are not significant:

- 1. Acquisition of the parcel will not change land use.
- 2. The purchase will permanently protect the parcel and thus provide a long-term, perpetual benefit to the target species and habitat. On May 10, 2010, Reclamation initiated informal consultation with the Service on the activities for projects in the CVPCP and the HRP for Fiscal Year 2010. The Service concurred on August 17, 2010 that the projects, including acquiring a parcel on the Elgorriaga Ranch, are not likely to adversely affect listed species.
- 4. The proposed action has no potential to affect historic properties.
- 5. The proposed action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets.

- 6. Implementing the proposed action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities.
- 7. The proposed action will not have significant cumulative impacts.
- 8. There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial.

# Elgorriaga Ranch Acquisition Phase II, Peppergrass Flat Project

**Environmental Assessment** 

August 2010



U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation Mid-Pacific Region Sacramento, CA



U. S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service Pacific Southwest Regional Office Sacramento, CA

# Background

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) proposes to provide \$217,960 from the Central Valley Project Conservation Program (CVPCP), and the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) proposes to provide \$59,040 from the Central Valley Project Improvement Act Habitat Restoration Program (HRP) to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as part of a multi-year project to purchase one of three parcels of Peppergrass Flat on the Elgorriaga Ranch in Fresno County, California (a total of \$277,000). This Environmental Assessment (EA) is for the purchase of three parcels that will ultimately be acquired by the BLM and funded by the CVPCP and HRP. The first of the three parcels will be purchased with FY2010 funds which is the focus of this EA.

Peppergrass Flat is nestled in the Ciervo Hills, a low-lying north-south tending range that forms the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley between Panoche Creek and Cantua Creek (Figures 1 and 2.) The parcels are located on the Ciervo Mountain 7.5' quad, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian, Fresno County, California, T 17 S, R 13 E, Sections 9 (FY2010), 3, and 11;

# Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the action is to protect the Peppergrass Flat area from development in order to maintain existing endangered species populations under permanent conservation and management by the Federal government. Three federally endangered species that have declined as a direct result of the conversion of arid grasslands and scrublands to irrigated agriculture in the western San Joaquin Valley will benefit from the action. Those species include the San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*), giant kangaroo rat, (*Dipodomys ingens*), and San Joaquin wooly-threads (*Monolopia congdonii*) It will also protect habitat for the short-nosed kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoides*), San Joaquin antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilis nelsoni*), the coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), and several species of endemic insects, all of which have been documented on the property. Protection of the three sections targeted for acquisition will substantially buffer San Joaquin kit fox and giant kangaroo rats from extinction in the face of threats to the Ciervo-Panoche populations from proposed renewable energy projects planned for the vicinity. The acquisition will substantially bring San Joaquin kit foxes and giant kangaroo rats closer to recovery and downlisting/delisting, and will benefit a host of other California Statelisted and native species that have been impacted by the Central Valley Project.

# **Proposed Action and Alternatives**

**No Action:** Reclamation and the Service would not contribute CVPCP or HRP funds to BLM to purchase one of three parcels in the Peppergrass Flat area on the Elgorriaga Ranch. BLM would be required to obtain the \$277,000 from other private and public sources. If the funding cannot be secured, BLM would not be able to purchase the parcel.

**Proposed Action:** Reclamation would provide \$217,960 from the Central Valley Project Conservation Program (CVPCP) and the Service would provide \$59,040 from the HRP to BLM

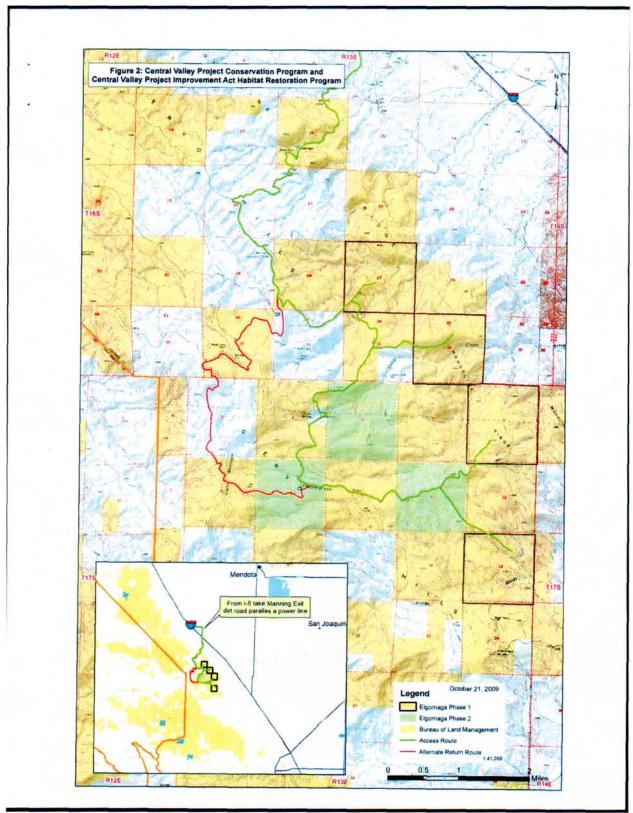


Figure 1. Elgorriaga Ranch Area



Figure 2 Peppergrass Flat parcels

to help acquire one of three parcels in the Peppergrass Flat area of the Elgorriaga Ranch. The parcel is 640 acres and is in Section 9 on figure 3.

Immediately upon purchasing the parcel, BLM will initiate a number of research activities, including recording of grazing history, species-specific surveys, and vegetation monitoring. Detailed documentation of past grazing methods will be obtained through interviews with the previous landowner. Surveys will consist of a one-time baseline survey using scat-detecting dogs and genetic analysis of scats to identify individual San Joaquin kit foxes, combined with motion-detection cameras and spotlighting. Giant kangaroo rats will be monitored through haystack counts, precinct surveys, and trapping by partners at one or more cooperating universities. Vegetation monitoring will be conducted through georeferenced photo points on a yearly basis as well as through quadrat sampling at standardized locations throughout the valley. Trends in species numbers will be assessed on a yearly basis. Partnerships with endangered species experts will be actively sought through Challenge Cost Share grants and California Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units funding. Data will be curated by BLM and disseminated through conference presentations and publication in peer-reviewed journals. Data will also be proactively shared with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and Reclamation.

# Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

#### Introduction

The following describes the environment and impacts for the three parcels.

# **Biological Resources**

#### **Affected Environment**

Peppergrass Flat is a natural landscape of gentle slope typified by valley grassland with some alkali scrub located in the Ciervo Hills on the west edge of the San Joaquin Valley.

The low-gradient topography of the Peppergrass Flat basin is the crucial factor that allows San Joaquin kit foxes and giant kangaroo rats to breed and forage there. The grasses are cropped extremely short over most of the valley and much of the ground is altogether bare, creating ideal habitat for kit fox. Approximately one acre of the Monvero Dunes sandy habitat is present on the northern parcel. The remaining area includes 100 acres of saltbush scrublands and almost 1900 acres of valley grassland that are targeted for acquisition. The parcel proposed for purchase consists of 640 acres of grassland.

In 1981, kit foxes and a kit fox den were documented on Peppergrass Flat (O'Farrel et al. 1981). In October and November of 2009, kit foxes were photographed on two nights on Peppergrass Flat using a passive motion detection camera. The population baseline for San Joaquin kit foxes on Peppergrass Flat can be considered low density and potentially at least one breeding family.

Williams et al. (1995) documented one giant kangaroo rat (GKR) colony in the northeast corner of section 3 of the acquisition area. The colony is small but still present. Two larger colonies on the main portion of Peppergrass Flat were observed via Google Earth in satellite photos taken in 2009 that were confirmed by ground observation. The presence of additional, larger colonies suggests that GKR is stable, to increasing, on Peppergrass Flat. Nonetheless, the colonies do not blanket the Flat in the same way observed in other areas, such as in the eastern Panoche Valley, suggesting that some limiting factor is present (or absent).

San Joaquin kit foxes are documented from Peppergrass Flat in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) as well as in targeted surveys funded by BLM in October and November 2009.

The state threatened San Joaquin antelope squirrel has been documented in the CNDDB as occurring at Peppergrass Flat.

The Ciervo aegialian scarab (*Aegialia concinna*,), San Joaquin dune beetle (*Coelus gracilis*), and Doyen's dune weevil (*Trigonoscuta sp.*) have been designated by the State of California as Species of Special Concern. The acquisition area includes a portion of the Monvero Dunes, a wind-blown sand formation that provides habitats for a host of endemic insects, including those listed here. The Dunes are historically restricted to a few hilltops along Monocline Ridge, with a total of less than 10 acres of viable habitat for the beetles. Approximately one acre of the Monvero Dunes lies within the Elgorriaga Ranch Acquisition Phase II, Peppergrass Flat Project.

The Elgorriaga Ranch provides habitats for the Lost Hills crownscale (*Atriplex vallida*), Panoche pepper-grass (*Lepidium jaredii ssp. albins*), and San Joaquin wooly-threads. The CNDDB has documented the presence of the three plant species in or near the sparse grasslands of Peppergrass Flat. All three species have declined as a result of the loss of arid valley grassland to irrigated agriculture. Targeted surveys and monitoring for rare plants will commence immediately after acquisition of the target parcels, and BLM will develop long-term enhancement plans to protect and foster sensitive plant species on the Ranch. The population baseline for the San Joaquin wooly-threads is unknown. Surveys during the spring flowering period will be initiated to assess current distribution of wooly-threads on Peppergrass Flat and to develop projects to enhance the species' population, if warranted.

#### **Environmental Consequences – Proposed Action**

Acquisition of lands in Peppergrass Flat would protect in perpetuity the entire habitat and species present on the parcel. Special status species are described above in the Affected Environment section. The immediate effect of the purchase on endangered species habitat is expected to be neutral or beneficial. The current grazing regime at Peppergrass Flat provides benefits to the San Joaquin kit fox and giant kangaroo rat by reducing annual grass growth in the valley. Therefore, grazing will likely continue through leases to the prior landowner. BLM is actively conducting research on grazing and revegetation strategies that, where necessary, can be employed to increase the carrying capacity of the land for endangered species. Should research identify restoration needs or opportunities, BLM will actively pursue funding to conduct such activities.

Because the population baselines of the three federally listed species in the acquisition area are categorized as "present" but "low density," BLM has the opportunity to significantly expand the populations of these species through research-based management. Managing for increased GKR populations requires careful planning as there are potential tradeoffs with management of native plants. Schiffman (1994) noted that GKR tend to enhance the growth of nonnative grasses, which have larger seeds than natives. BLM will seek a balance on Peppergrass Flat between native plants and GKR.

The preservation of Peppergrass Flat will contribute to BLM's long-range goals of preserving endangered species habitat and promoting species recovery through a strategic process of targeted land acquisitions and subsequent management activities. Management activities include prescribed grazing, habitat restoration, and research. The objective of BLM's strategy is to preserve and enhance core populations of endangered species identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Plan for upland species in the San Joaquin Valley, and to protect the western San Joaquin Valley corridor region. Recent acquisitions by BLM along Monocline Ridge, including the purchase of 3,200 acres of the Elgorriaga Ranch with \$1,038,476 in FY2005 funding by the CVPCP, have secured a significant buffer zone along the eastern edge of the Ciervo Hills. In the near future, BLM intends to purchase four parcels from Philip Martin directly to the south of the currently proposed parcel, thus creating a well-shaped polygon of protected habitats in the crucial corridor zone between Pleasant Valley and Panoche Valley (Cypher et al 2007). Each of these acquisitions contribute to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's recovery criteria described in its 1998 Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley, California (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1998) by preserving the core populations of San Joaquin kit foxes and giant kangaroo rats in the Ciervo-Panoche Natural Area, as well as preserving the western San Joaquin Valley corridor. Therefore, the acquisition of Peppergrass Flat is a crucial component of the Service's and BLM's long-term acquisition strategy to provide substantial cumulative benefits for all special status species in the Ciervo-Panoche region.

A proposed solar farm in Panoche Valley is slated to destroy thousands of acres of prime kit fox and kangaroo rat flatland habitat in the Ciervo-Panoche region. The threat of habitat loss on such a massive scale vastly increases the conservation value of any remaining flatlands in the Ciervo-Panoche Natural Area. Peppergrass Flat is one of only a very few such flat areas in the Ciervo-Panoche area.

#### Environmental Consequences - No Action

If the proposed acquisition of Peppergrass Flat does not occur, an opportunity to secure endangered species in the Ciervo-Panoche Natural Area from development would be irrevocably lost. A proposed solar farm in Panoche Valley is slated to destroy thousands of acres of prime flatland kit fox and kangaroo rat habitat in the Ciervo-Panoche region. Private lands in Panoche Valley previously valued at less than \$500/acre have been reportedly optioned for over \$2,700/acre. There is only a brief window in which to act before remaining private property in the area, which is considered a prime solar production site, is optioned.

#### **Cultural Resources**

#### Affected Environment

Cultural resources is a broad term that includes prehistoric, historic, architectural, and traditional cultural properties. The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 is the primary Federal legislation that outlines the Federal Government's responsibility to cultural resources. Section 106 of the NHPA requires the Federal Government to take into consideration the effects of an undertaking on cultural resources listed on or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Those resources that are on or eligible for inclusion in the NRHP are referred to as historic properties.

The Section 106 process is outlined in the Federal regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800. These regulations describe the process that the Federal agency (Reclamation) takes to identify cultural resources and the level of effect that the proposed undertaking will have on historic properties; since Reclamation is providing the majority of the funding, they are the lead agency on the Section 106 process. In summary, Reclamation must first determine if the action is the type of action that has the potential to affect historic properties. If the action is the type of action to affect historic properties, Reclamation must identify the area of potential effects (APE), determine if historic properties are present within that APE, determine the effect that the undertaking will have on historic properties, and consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), to seek concurrence on Reclamation's findings. In addition, Reclamation is required through the Section 106 process to consult with Indian Tribes concerning the identification of sites of religious or cultural significance, and consult with individuals or groups who are entitled to be consulting parties or have requested to be consulting parties.

The proposed project is located on the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley along the eastern foothill region of the California Coast Range. Ethnographically the area was occupied by the Northern Valley Yokuts. The project area is also located south of the B.F. Sisk Dam and Little Panoche Dam. The eastern Coast Ranch foothills as well as the western San Joaquin Valley is known to have an extensive archaeological record. Prehistoric archaeological sites in the area could date as old as 6000 B.C. Historic period archaeological sites are most likely related to grazing and agricultural developments over time.

#### **Environmental Consequences – Proposed Action**

The proposed action will involve the use of Federal appropriations to purchase lands for the BLM. The lands will be within Federal jurisdiction under the ownership and administrative control of the BLM. The BLM, as a Federal agency, has a responsibility to comply with Section 106 of the NHPA. The current action to provide funds to assist in the purchase of these lands for the BLM has no potential to cause effects to historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.3(a)(1) of the Section 106 implementing regulations. When future actions occur within the project area, those actions will be subject to Section 106 review pursuant to BLM and their Section 106 process. The proposed action will have no impact to cultural resources.

#### **Environmental Consequences – No Action**

The No Action alternative will result in the perpetuation of existing conditions within the project area. The decision to implement the No Action Alternative would result in no Federal Undertaking as defined by Section 301(7) of the NHPA. Without an undertaking, Reclamation would not implement Section 106 review. The No Action alternative would result in no impact to cultural resources by Reclamation.

#### **Indian Trust Assets**

Indian Trust Assets (ITAs) are legal interests in property or rights held in trust by the United States for Indian Tribes or individual Indians. Indian reservations, Rancherias, and Public Domain Allotments are common ITAs in California. There are no ITAs at or near the project site. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not adversely affect ITAs.

#### **Environmental Justice**

Executive Order 12898 requires each Federal Agency to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including social and economic effects of its program, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. Since there would be no change in existing or similar land uses, there would be no adverse human health or environmental effects to minority or low-income populations.

### **Consultation and Coordination with Others**

# Meetings

Reclamation and Service managers of the CVPCP and the CVPIA Habitat Restoration Program (HRP), along with the interagency Technical Team that assists in the annual project proposal and selection process, reviewed and ranked the Elgorriaga Ranch Acquisition Phase II, Peppergrass Flat Project proposal during the HRP and CVPCP proposal review process. The proposal ranked in the top tier of land acquisition proposals and was selected for funding following this evaluation of the project. A site visit was also conducted as part of this review.

# **Applicable Laws and Regulations**

#### National Environmental Policy Act of 1970

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process is intended to help public officials make decisions that are based on an understanding of environmental consequences and take actions that protect, restore, and enhance the environment. Regulations implementing NEPA are set forth by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). Reclamation has followed NEPA and CEQ regulations in the development of proposed action for this EA.

#### Endangered Species Act (16 USC. 1521 et seq.)

Section 7 of this Act requires Federal agencies to ensure that all federally associated activities within the United States do not jeopardize the continued existence of threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat of these species. Action agencies must consult with the Service, which maintains current lists of species that have been designated as threatened or endangered, to determine the potential impacts a project may have on protected species.

On May 10, 2010, Reclamation initiated informal consultation with the Service on the activities for projects in the CVPCP and HRP for Fiscal Year 2010, since Reclamation is providing the majority of the funding. The Service concurred on August 17, 2010 that the projects selected for funding in FY2010, including this proposed action, are not likely to adversely affect listed species.

#### National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC 470 et. seq.)

The NHPA of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), is the primary Federal legislation that outlines the Federal Government's responsibility for protecting historic properties. Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to evaluate the effects of Federal undertakings on historic properties. The 36 CFR Part 800 regulations that implement Section 106 of the NHPA describe how Federal agencies address these effects. The Proposed Action was determined to result in no potential to cause effects to historic properties pursuant to the regulations at 36 CFR Part 800.3(a)(1). Attached is the regional archeologist review memo.

#### **Indian Trust Assets**

The proposed project was reviewed by Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Regional Office, Indian Trust Assets Coordinator, Patricia Rivera and a "no impacts to Indian Tribal Trust Assets" concurrence was received on May 4, 2010 and is attached for reference.

# **Bibliography**

- Cypher, B., Phillips, S.E., and P.A. Kelly. 2007. Habitat suitability and potential corridors for San Joaquin kit fox in the San Luis Unit: Fresno, Kings and Merced Counties, California. Prepared for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, South-Central Area Office, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Endangered Species Program. May 22, 2007. 34 p.
- O'Farrell, T.P., McCue, P. and Kato, T. 1981. Potential of BLM lands in western Fresno and eastern San Benito Counties, California, as critical habitats for the endangered San Joaquin kit fox, *Vulpes macrotis mutica*, and blunt-nosed leopard lizard, *Crotaphytus silus*. Prepared for the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior

- through interagency agreement CA-010-IA1-11 with the U.S> Department of Defense, Nevada Operations Office, November 1981. 46 p. + 4 appendices.
- Schiffman, P. M. 1994. Promotion of exotic weed establishment by endangered giant kangaroo rats (*Dipodomys ingens*) in a California grassland. *Biodiversity and Conservation* 3:524–537.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1998. Recovery plan for upland species of the San Joaquin Valley, California. Region 1, Portland, OR. 319 pp.
- Williams D.F., Davis M.K., Hamilton L.P. (1995) Distribution, population size, and habitat features of giant kangaroo rats in the northern segment of their geographic range. California Department of Fish and Game, Bird and Mammal Conservation Program Report 95–01.

From:

Nickels, Adam M

Sent:

Friday, July 02, 2010 11:04 AM

To:

Kleinsmith, Douglas H

Cc:

Perry, Laureen (Laurie) M; Stefani, Rosemary A; Strait, Daniel H; Barnes, Amy J; Bruce, Brandee E; Goodsell, Joanne E; Leigh, Anastasia T; Overly, Stephen

A; Ramsey, Dawn

Subject:

RE: Elgorriaga Ranch Acquisition Phase II draft EA

Attachments:

CR edits to Elgorriaga Ranch Peppergrass.docx

Follow Up Flag:

Follow up

Flag Status:

Completed

Project No. 10-MPRO-179

Doug:

I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment (EA) for Elgorriaga Ranch Acquisition Phase II, Peppergrass Flat Project. I have included the necessary cultural resource language (attached) and ask that it be incorporated in the Final Draft EA.

After reviewing the Proposed Action I conclude that the Proposed Action will result in no potential to cause effects to historic properties pursuant to the regulations at 36 CFR Part 800.3(a)(1). The land that is being acquired will fall under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM is subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and all future actions which constitute undertakings will be reviewed by BLM for effects to cultural resources. The assistance by Reclamation to help in the purchase of lands that will be administered by BLM is generally considered an administrative action. The Proposed Action will have no impact on cultural resources.

This email is intended to conclude the Section 106 process. Please retain a copy of this email with the Administrative Record for this EA. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Adam M. Nickels - Archaeologist - M.S.

Phone: 916.978.5053 - Fax: 916978.5055 - www.usbr.gov

RECLAMATION - Mid-Pacific Regional Office MP-153 2800 Cottage Way - Sacramento, California 95825



From:

Rivera, Patricia L

Sent:

Tuesday, May 04, 2010 12:02 PM

To:

Kleinsmith, Douglas H

Subject:

RE: ITA requests for 2010 CVPCP and HRP projects

Follow Up Flag:

Follow up

Flag Status:

Flagged

Doug,

I reviewed the proposed actions for 5 activities:

- 1. Population Dynamics of Central Population of Calif. Tiger Salamander
- 2. Riparian Restoration for Riparian Brush Rabbit at San Joaquin NWR
- 3. JCR Ranch Acquisition
- 4. Elgorriaga Ranch Acquisition II
- 5. Coyote Ridge Serpentine Habitat Acquisition UTC property

#### The proposed actions are:

- 1. Study of populations of salamanders at Jepson Prairie Reserve and locations in Alameda and Merced counties.
- 2. Vegetate levees on San Joaquin River NWR
- 3. Provide funding to help purchase a conservation easement on 1409 acres of vernal pool and grassland habitat
- 4. Provide funding to help purchase a conservation easement on 1995 acres of San Joaquin Valley grassland and alkali scrub habitat.
- 5. Provide funding to help purchase 1638 acre site.

The proposed action do not have a potential to affect Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA is Chicken Ranch Rancheria, which is approximately 24 miles North of the project location.

Patricia